

The opinion in support of the decision being entered
today is *not* binding precedent of the Board.

UNITED STATES PATENT AND TRADEMARK OFFICE

BEFORE THE BOARD OF PATENT APPEALS
AND INTERFERENCES

Ex parte JOEL E. SHORT, RAY S. EWAN,
and JEROME SORCSEK

Appeal 2007-1976
Application 09/693,512
Technology Center 2100

Decided: October 10, 2007

Before KENNETH W. HAIRSTON, JOHN C. MARTIN, and ANITA
PELLMAN GROSS, *Administrative Patent Judges*.

HAIRSTON, *Administrative Patent Judge*.

REMAND TO THE EXAMINER

A preliminary review of the record before us leads us to conclude that
this case is not in condition for a decision on appeal.

The subject application was filed on October 20, 2000, and it claims
the benefit of an October 22, 1999 date in 60/161,181.

Appeal 2007-1976
Application 09/693,512

The primary reference to Morris, U.S. Patent No. 6,453,361 B1, has an October 27, 2000 filing date.

Although the Appellants did not question the use of a prior art reference with a filing date after the filing date of the subject application, we must, however, raise it as an issue *sua sponte* because a proper prior art rejection can not be based on an improper prior art reference. Thus, the application is hereby remanded to the Examiner for further consideration.

This application, by virtue of its “special” status, requires an immediate action. *See* MPEP § 708.01. It is important that the Board be informed promptly of any action affecting the appeal in this case.

Appeal 2007-1976
Application 09/693,512

REMANDED

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